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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3365
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC 8164
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5376
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 9223
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5273
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SEOUL 000284

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/PD FOR SWALKER, EAP/P, EAP/K
STATE PASS USDA ELECTRONICALLY FOR FAX/ITP SCHEIKH
STATE PASS USTR FOR RCASSIDY
USDOC FOR 4430/IEP/OPB/EAP/JDONIUS
TREASURY FOR OASIA/MGREWE
CINCPAC FOR J-74

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [KS](#) [US](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IN SEOUL

Subject: Media Reaction; Seoul

East Asia and Pacific; North Korea

"North Korea Will Have to Pay for Missile Test"

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized (02/25): "Missile or satellite, this is the first time that North Korea has given advance notice of such a move, apparently to get the attention of the international community, including the U.S. North Korea might have calculated that its saber-rattling might increase its leverage in future denuclearization or normalization negotiations. However, that is a huge miscalculation. A missile launch by North Korea would either toughen existing UN sanctions or prompt the international community to impose fresh sanctions against the North."

"North Korea's Real Intentions behind Announcement to Launch Satellite"

Moderate Hankook Ilbo editorialized (02/25): "The North's announcement of plans to 'launch a satellite' may be a signal that it has no intention of escalating tensions further. As Secretary Clinton pointed out, North Korea is creating tensions to unite its people during its leadership crisis, including the succession problem. Many analysts believe that North Korea may be preparing a 'space show' to demonstrate its goal of becoming a 'prosperous and great country' ahead of the nomination of a successor to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il through the upcoming parliamentary elections in March and the plenary session in April."

"Breaking the Cycle of Brinkmanship"

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized (02/25): "North Korea seems to be thinking that it has more to gain than to lose by firing a missile. A missile launch, however, would further isolate the North from the international community as opinions of the nations involved in the Six-Party Talks turned against the communist state. It is also highly probable that the Obama Administration's process of reviewing American policy toward the North would lose momentum. North Korea would have a big price to pay internationally, even if it does score a few points on the home front in terms of handing the ruling elite a rationale to unite its people. Relevant countries

should work hard to resume the Six-Party Talks in order to stop the missile launch. U.S. Special Envoy Stephen Bosworth especially needs to get busy. The Obama Administration has said that it is going to work harder on North Korea, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said that the issue of North Korean missiles is going to be part of the negotiations with Pyongyang. Bosworth should be able to use the missile issue as a starting point for new U.S.-North Korean dialogue."

Global Economy

"After All, the U.S. Is the Problem"

Editorial Writer Kim Jong-su wrote in right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo (02/25): "U.S. President Barack Obama has missed a golden opportunity to pull the world out of the current economic quagmire. Of course, the current crisis is too serious for the U.S. alone to deal with. However, if this (economic stimulus) measure had cleaned up the troublesome factors of the U.S. economy, which are the cause of the current crisis, it would have at least eased the uncertainty and anxiety sweeping across the world. The Obama Administration, however, failed to clean house. Since there is no sign from the epicenter of the crisis that the explosion has ended, uncertainty and anxiety are still lingering on."

Stephens